

sweeping under trees there perhaps half a mile from the first spot, on the day that *B. bicolor* was taken. Collin (1961, *Brit. Flies*, 6 (1): 41) states that this 'is far from being a common British species' and records it from Gloucs., Oxon., Suffolk, Cambs. and Essex only.—A. A. ALLEN, 63 Blackheath Park, S.E.3. 15.vi.68.

NOMENCLATURE—Mr. J. L. Campbell's letter in your June issue came as a breath of fresh air in a stuffy room.

It revived memories of my crusade of four years ago against the exclusive use of Latin names, a proceeding which in my opinion effectually hamstrings identification facilities.

This academic exercise in Latin names goes back many, many years.

I have before me a copy of 'The Field naturalist's Handbook', published in 1904 and the authors of this highly informative book were those reverend gentlemen J. G. and Theodore Wood; the price of this gold mine was one shilling.

This is what they have to say on the topic.

"Nomenclature is always a difficulty in science. The love of change merely for its own sake is unfortunately given more scope in entomology than in any other branch of science, except perhaps, ornithology, and few persons who write of insects or birds can resist the temptation to alter their names.

"It is bad enough that either the popular or scientific name should be changed, but when both are altered, identification is almost impossible. Yet this is done in the most reckless manner, and without consideration for the difficulties thrown in the way of others".

I find it very comforting to have my own convictions fortified in this manner.—L. G. F. WADDINGTON, 9 Greenleaf Avenue, Wheatley Hills, Doncaster.

POLIANA NATALENSIS (BTLR.) AND *P. oheffernani* GESS (LEPIDOPTERA, SPHINGIDAE).—I was very interested to see the brief reference to Gess' paper in the March *Entomologist's Record* (80: 86), and, through the kindness of Mr. Carcasson of the National Museum, Nairobi, I have been able to borrow a copy.

As a matter of interest, Mr. Carcasson writes that *oheffernani* is definitely our (i.e. the East African) species, but that our northern specimens appear to be much bigger, possibly Gess' specimens, being bred, were a little undersized. I understand that the National Museum has specimens from as far west as Sierra Leone. Many of the specimens in the National Museum have the pair of "heavy blackish longitudinal streaks on the forewing between veins M3 and Cu2" well developed, so that "the total or virtual absence" of these is not a distinguishing feature for *oheffernani*.

I have two females of *oheffernani* from Kampala in my collection, one bred and the other caught at mercury vapour light, and there are certain differences between Gess' description of the larva and mine. The most noticeable is the fact that my larva had a fairly dense coating of short, erect colourless pubescence, which is not mentioned by Gess. Incidentally the larva of *Xanthopan morgani* Wlk. is similarly clad. The other differences are as under:—

	Kampala larva	South African larva
Lateral stripes	All continued onto somite behind.	Not continued onto somite behind, except the 7th.
Spiracle	Purple, narrowly rimmed with white, with a narrow ring of white-speckled purple.	Centred with red.
Horn	Greenish yellow.	Green.
Dorsal stripe	Yellow.	Greenish white.
Sublateral area	4th to 10th somites with white-speckled purple blotches.	Area below spiracles finely maculated.
Head	Pale pinkish brown, an olive brown stripe on each side of median suture and a pale green lateral stripe.	A large proportion of the frons (but not clypeus) orange-brown.

Food-plants — My larva was found feeding on *Spathodea nilotica* (Bignoniaceae). Le Pelley (*Agricultural Insects of East Africa*), under *natalensis*, gives *Markhamia platycalyx* (Bignoniaceae), but in view of Carcasson's remarks this almost certainly applies to *oheffernani*. Pinhey (*Hawk Moths of Central and Southern Africa*) gives *Brachystegia* (Caesalpinaceae) for *natalensis*, and this might apply to either species.

The sequence of colour changes in the ovum—from green to black, and then back to green again—is most unusual, I was tempted to write 'unique'. and I know of nothing similar either from published records or from my own breeding experience.—D. G. SEVASOPULO, F.R.E.S., Mombasa, 19.vii.68.

CHRYSOTOXUM VERNALE LOEW (DIPTERA: SYRPHIDAE). A female of this species, stated by Coe to be rare, was taken in the area of Studland Heath National Nature Reserve known as Spur Heath on 1st June 1968.

No other examples of this species were seen at the time.

REFERENCE

- Coe, R. L. Handbooks for the Identification of British Insects, Vol. X, Part I. Diptera Syrphidae. The Royal Entomological Society of London.
—ALAN J. BROWN, 1 Weir View, Charminster, Dorchester, Dorset. 7.viii.1968.

We very much regret to announce that owing to ill-health, Mr Parmenter finds himself forced to give up the office of Honorary Treasurer, which he has filled with such efficiency during the past three years.

The Editor would be very glad to hear of any reader qualified for such a post, who would be willing to take over the duties of the Treasurer as from January 1st next, or earlier if he be willing. An honorarium of £50 per year is paid to the holder of this office.

Will any volunteer for this post please write to the Editor at 54 Hayes Lane, Bromley BR2 9EE, Kent.